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INVINCIBLE GUARDIANS OF WORLD FREEDOM!

SHOGUN WARRIORS™

THE *DEATH* OF THE FOLLOWERS OF LIGHT...

THE *DESTRUCTION* OF SHOGUN SANCTUARY--

YOU DARE NOT MISS:

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED!

From an ancient sanctuary hidden in the mountains of Japan come Raydeen, Combatra and Dangard Ace— giant robots operated by three courageous humans, Richard Carson, Genji Odashu, and Ilongo Savage — ready to fight the forces of evil wherever they arise!

STan Lee PRESENTS: SHOGUN WARRIORS™

DEATH OF INNOCENCE

DR. DEMONICUS HAS BEEN DEFEATED OFF THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA AND, BEING CLOSE TO RICHARD CARSON'S HOME, THE SHOGUN OPERATORS HAVE REQUESTED ADDITIONAL TIME FOR REST, TALK, AND SOLO PRACTICE WITH THE HUGE ROBOTS. THEIR MENTORS-- THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LIGHT -- HAVE GRANTED THE REQUEST!

FOLLOW ME-- AND LET'S USE THE TRIP TO HONE EACH OF OUR SPECIAL SKILLS.

SO, ALMOST PLAYFULLY, RAYDEEN CONVERTS TO FIREHAWK; COMBATRA LACES THE SKY WITH AERIAL ACROBATICS; AND DANGARD ACE TAKES TO THE SEA...

WHAT THE--?! LOOK OUT!!

...TO THE EXTREME DISTRESS OF A HAPLESS FISHING SCHOONER.

DOUG MOENCH WRITER | HERB TRIMPE ARTIST | MIKE ESPOSITO INKER | DIANA ALBERS LETTERER | BEN SEAN COLORIST | AL MILGROM EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER ED-IN-CHIEF

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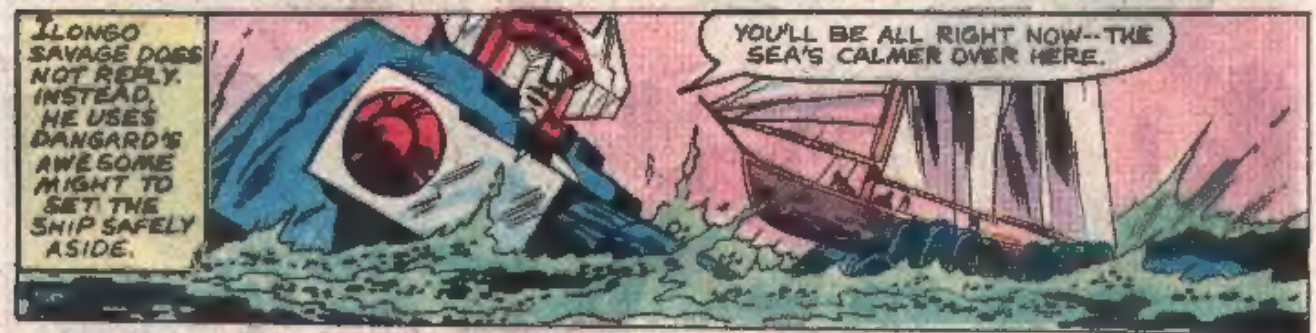
IT'S SOME KIND OF GIANT METAL MONSTER--COMIN' STRAIGHT AT US, CAUSIN' A TIDAL WAVE! WE'RE GONNA BE SWAMPED!!

BUT, LIKE A GIGANTIC KID IN A TUB OF MAMMOTH PROPORTIONS, DANGARD EFFORTLESSLY LIFTS THE SHIP FROM THE SWELLS...
EASY, FRIENDS. I DIDN'T SEE YOU AT FIRST. I APOLOGIZE.
KUH?! IT TALKS!

FROM COMBATRA'S CONTROL COCKPIT, GENJI ODASHU OBSERVES.
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE PRACTICING, ILONGO--NOT PLAYING SEA-MONSTER.


ILONGO SAVAGE DOES NOT REPLY. INSTEAD, HE USES DANGARD'S AWESOME MIGHT TO GET THE SHIP SAFELY ASIDE.
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW--THE SEA'S CALMER OVER HERE.

THEN, BEFORE THE FISHERMEN CAN RECOVER FROM THEIR INITIAL SHOCK...
WOW! LOOK! HE'S CHANGING --LOCKING HIS BODY PARTS INTO A NEW FORM!!

INDEED--AND DANGARD ACE'S "NEW FORM" IS THE CONVERSION MODE CALLED... DREADNOUGHT TITAN.

FROM RAYDEEN, RICHARD CARSON SNAPS A COMMAND...
ALL RIGHT--NO MESSIN' AROUND. LET'S HEAD FOR MY PLACE...

...AND LET'S DO IT FAST!
SO SAYING, THE THREE SHOGUN WARRIORS CONVERT TO FLIGHT MODES, AND BECOME MERE, RECEDING STREAKS ACROSS THE MIDDAY SKY.

NINETY SECONDS LATER, CARSON PROUDLY INDICATES A UNIQUE HILLSIDE STRUCTURE...
THERE SHE IS--HOME SWEET HOME.
THE ROBOTS SHOULD BE SAFE HERE IN THE VALLEY--IT'S FAIRLY DESERTED HERE--WE'LL HOOF IT TO THE HOUSE.
BUT... I DON'T UNDERSTAND. MY GIRL, DEENA, SHOULD BE LOOKING AFTER THE HOUSE--BUT SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE--
FREEZE! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
D-D-DEENA...?
FROM WITHIN RAYDEEN, CARSON WOULD LOOK UPON THE SHOTGUN AS A JOKE. RIGHT NOW, HE CAN BARELY STAMMER...
RICHARD--AND GENJI! I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT YOU! BUT YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL, BUSTER--I COULD'VE BEEN ONE OF THOSE MEN IN BLACK WHO'VE BEEN BUGGING US!
TOUCHÉ, DEENA. THOUGH THEY'RE NOT USUALLY THAT SUBTLE.
INSIDE, AFTER DEENA HAS BEEN INTRODUCED TO ILONGO SAVAGE...
THANK GOD IT WAS ONLY YOU, RICHARD. I'VE BEEN SPOOKED ALL NIGHT.
AHH, GOOD TO BE HOME... DID YOU SAY SPOOKED, DEENA?
WHEN I HEARD YOU MAKE THAT NOISE, I WAS CONVINCED IT WAS THE MEN IN BLACK AGAIN. WHY WERE YOU POKING AROUND OUT BACK ANYWAY?
WHAT NOISE? WE DIDN'T COME FROM THE BACK. WE--
KLUNK
THAT NOISE DID COME FROM THE BACK, CARSON!

CONTINUED AFTER 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

ABRUPTLY, EXPLOSIVELY...
BAKT
KEESH
IT'S THE MEN IN BLACK-- GET DOWN!!
LOOK OUT! IT'S SOME KIND OF GAS-BOMB!
CHOOM
BRAK BRAK BRAK
THE ASSAULT, SWIFT AND BRUTAL IN ITS ALL-OUT FURY, DECIMATES THE ROOM--SHATTERING ANY CHANCE FOR DEFENSE...

ILONGO SAVAGE STRUGGLES VALIANTLY--
--BUT IN VAIN!
IN MERE MOMENTS, THE NERVE-GAS TAKES EFFECT.
CAN..BARELY MOVE...FEELS LIKE I'M...UNDERWATER...
YEAH... STUCK IN SLOW-MOTION...GAS MUST AFFECT MOTOR-NERVES...MUSCLES...
THE KEYHOLE PENDANTS GIVEN TO YOU BY THE FOLLOWERS...
..HAND THEM OVER
NO CHOICE...GOT TO...OBEY...
QUICKLY, EFFICIENTLY, ALL BUT ONE OF THE MYSTERIOUS MEN IN BLACK LEAVE THE HOUSE, TAKING THE PRECIOUS PENDANTS WITH THEM...
WE DO NOT REQUIRE YOUR LIVES...BUT I WILL TAKE THEM IF FORCED TO.
STILL CAN'T MOVE--BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE ROBOTS SOMEHOW.
THE HOURS DRAG BY, AND AS THE PARALYZING EFFECTS OF THE NERVE-GAS GRADUALLY WEAR OFF, CARSON REALIZES THAT HIS MIND HAS ALSO BEEN FOGGED...
JUST OCCURRED TO ME, SAVAGE--WHY WEREN'T THEY BOTHERED BY THE GAS?
YOU'RE RIGHT, CARSON...

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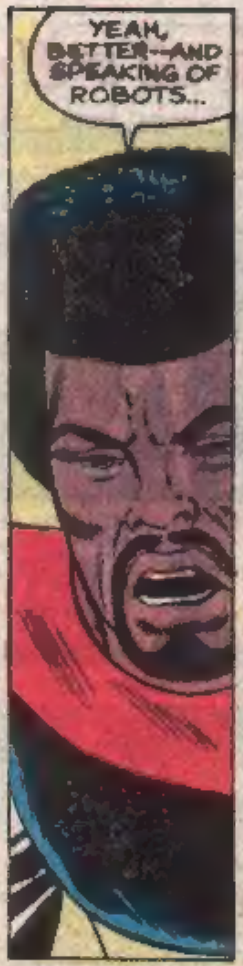
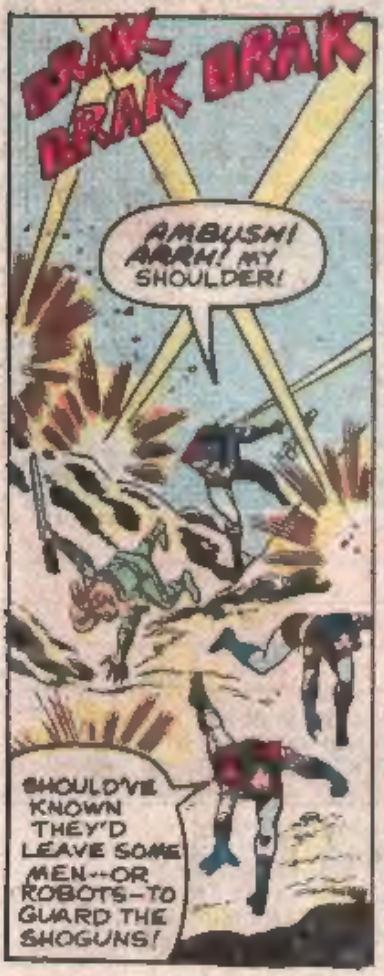
SURE--AND THE WAY THEY MOVE, THE MONOTONE OF THEIR VOICES--IT'S ALL STARTING TO FALL IN PLACE...
I'M GONNA MAKE A MOVE--GET READY TO FOLLOW UP ON IT.
RICHARD! WHAT ARE YOU--?
SPLAK-T
POLAR-LENSES--WHERE ARE THEY? CAN'T SEE?
BRAK BRAK
HURRY DEENA--HE'S BLIND! GET THE SHOTGUN!
NOW, DEENA! CUT HIM IN HALF!!
STILL HARD TO MOVE, RICHARD, BUT I'LL GIVE IT MY--
BRAM
--BEST SHOT!





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I FEEL LIKE A FOOL FOR DROPPING THAT WEAPON.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, ILONGO--I THINK WE ALL FEEL RATHER HELPLESS OUTSIDE THE SHOGUNS. WHAT DO YOU THINK RICHARD IS UP TO?
I DON'T KNOW GENJI, BUT I SURE HOPE HE SUCCEEDS BEFORE--
EH--?
DEENA! THERE'S ONE OVER HERE--QUICK!
BINGO! GLAD TO OBLIGE, MR. SAVAGE.
BRAM
OUT OF SHELLS AND... WAIT! LISTEN --FROM THE HOUSE...
A RUMBLING SOUND. WHAT IS IT?
ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE...
"A CYCLE! RICHARD WENT BACK FOR HIS CYCLE. THE FOOL!"
FOOL OR DARE-DEVIL, RICHARD CARSON IS ONE OF THE BEST STUNT-MEN IN HOLLY-WOOD.
STILL, NO GAUNLET IN THE REALM OF MOVIES WAS EVER QUITE AS DEADLY AS THIS.
SHOOTING THE RIM OF THE RAVINE, HE LEAPS OFF HIS BIKE INTO THE PLANE OF RAYDEEN'S AUTOMATIC SHIMMER-TUBE...
...AND RISES THROUGH THE ANTI-GRAVITY BEAM TOWARD THE BOARDING PORTAL.

INSIDE THE COCKPIT, HE FEVERISHLY PUNCHES OUT THE SEQUENCE FOR RAYDEEN'S TARGET-SEEKING MODE...
THERE THEY ARE--JUST LIKE SHOOTING FISH IN A BARREL...
TARGET IN
VISUAL TARGET MODE
...OR ROBOTS IN A RAVINE.
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH
THE BULLET-MISSILES BURST FROM RAYDEEN'S FINGERTIP-HOUSING...
...EACH ONE SCORING A DEVASTATING DIRECT HIT.
KROOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
THEN, AS RAYDEEN LIFTS GENJI AND ILONGO TOWARD COMBATRA AND DANGARD...
DEENA, GET AWAY FROM HERE--GO BACK TO YOUR PLACE UNTIL YOU HEAR FROM ME.
AW, C'MON, RICHARD! WHY CAN'T I GET IN ON THE FUN!
THIS IS NOT FUN--IT'S DANGEROUS! SO DO AS I SAY!
NOW I'VE GOT TO CONTACT DOC TAMBURA AND THE FOLLOWERS AT SHOGUN SANCTUARY...
DR. TAMBURA'S FACE INSTANTLY APPEARS ON THE MONITOR...
WHERE WERE YOU, RICHARD CARBON? WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH YOU AND THE OTHERS THROUGH THE PENDANTS FOR HOURS!
THIS IS NO TIME FOR A SCOLDING, DOC.

THE PENDANTS HAVE BEEN STOLEN!
WHAT?!
YEAH, BY MEN IN BLACK-- BUT THEY'RE REALLY ROBOTS--AND THEY KNOW ABOUT YOU!
KNOW ABOUT US? ABOUT SANCTUARY?
I DON'T KNOW BUT THEY MENTIONED THE "FOLLOWERS" BY NAME - AND THEY KNEW YOU GAVE US THE PENDANTS! YOU'VE GOT TO WATCH OUT-- BE ALERT!
BUT HOW COULD
DR. TAMBURA COME QUICKLY!
EH-? WHAT IS IT, CHARN?
TROUBLE! WE'RE UNDER-- ATTACK!
NO!!
GENJI-- SAVAGE! I LOST THE SIGNAL FROM SANCTUARY! THERE'S TROUBLE
PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE LAUNCH!
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!
BLAST OFF!
THE AIR IS FILLED WITH A DEAFENING TRIPLE ROAR! THE EARTH SHAKES.
NEARBY CLIFFSIDES SPLIT AND CRUMBLE INTO THE SEA

AND THE EFFECTS ARE FELT AS MUCH AS FORTY MILES AWAY
EARTHQUAKE! GET OUTSIDE BEFORE THE ROOF CAVES IN!
MY WIFE BEGGED ME NOT TO MOVE TO L.A.!
MEANWHILE, THE THREE CAUSES OF THE "EARTHQUAKE" ARE ALREADY PENETRATING THE STRATOSPHERE.
SANCUARY'S HALF-WAY AROUND THE WORLD
SINCE THE FOLLOWERS CAN'T TELE-PORT US--
LET'S TRY AN-OTHER WAY OF GETTING THERE
FIRST WE'LL CONVERT TO OUR SUPERSONIC MODES AND KICK IN THE AFTER-BURNERS.
WARNING-REDUCE
DANGER-FLIGHT MODE CONVERSION
THEN WE CAN USE A NEAR SPACE ORBIT TO SLINGSHOT AROUND THE PLANET COUNTER TO THE EARTH'S ROTATION
--AND LET THE COMPUTERS' HOMING SIGNALS DO THE REST
SOON, PLUNGING BACK DOWN INTO THE ATMOS-PHERE
THE COMPUTERS CALCULATIONS WERE PERFECT - WE'RE AL MOST THERE!
YOU'RE RIGHT, SAVAGE. THOSE ARE THE HIMALAYAS AND SANCTUARY'S IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT MOUNTAIN CLUSTER

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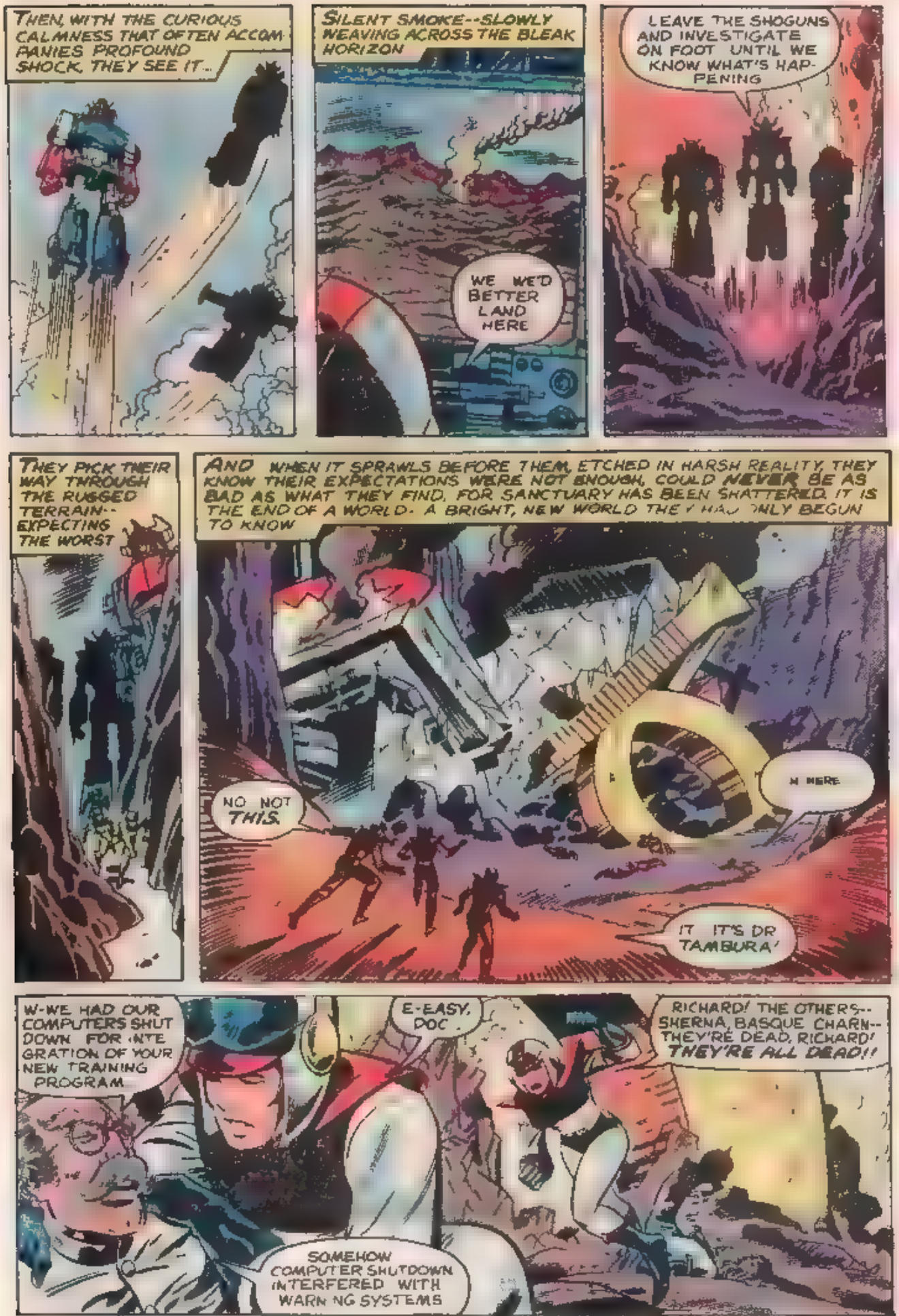
THEN, WITH THE CURIOUS CALMNESS THAT OFTEN ACCOMPANIES PROFOUND SHOCK, THEY SEE IT..
SILENT SMOKE--SLOWLY WEAVING ACROSS THE BLEAK HORIZON
WE WE'D BETTER LAND HERE
LEAVE THE SHOGUNS AND INVESTIGATE ON FOOT UNTIL WE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING
THEY PICK THEIR WAY THROUGH THE RUGGED TERRAIN-- EXPECTING THE WORST
AND WHEN IT SPRAWLS BEFORE THEM, ETCHED IN HARSH REALITY, THEY KNOW THEIR EXPECTATIONS WERE NOT ENOUGH, COULD NEVER BE AS BAD AS WHAT THEY FIND. FOR SANCTUARY HAS BEEN SHATTERED. IT IS THE END OF A WORLD. A BRIGHT, NEW WORLD THEY HAD ONLY BEGUN TO KNOW
NO NOT THIS.
H HERE
IT IT'S DR TAMBURA!
W-WE HAD OUR COMPUTERS SHUT DOWN FOR INTEGRATION OF YOUR NEW TRAINING PROGRAM.
E-EASY, DOC.
RICHARD! THE OTHERS-- SKERNA, BASQUE CHARN-- THEY'RE DEAD, RICHARD! THEY'RE ALL DEAD!!
SOMEHOW COMPUTER SHUTDOWN INTERFERED WITH WARNING SYSTEMS

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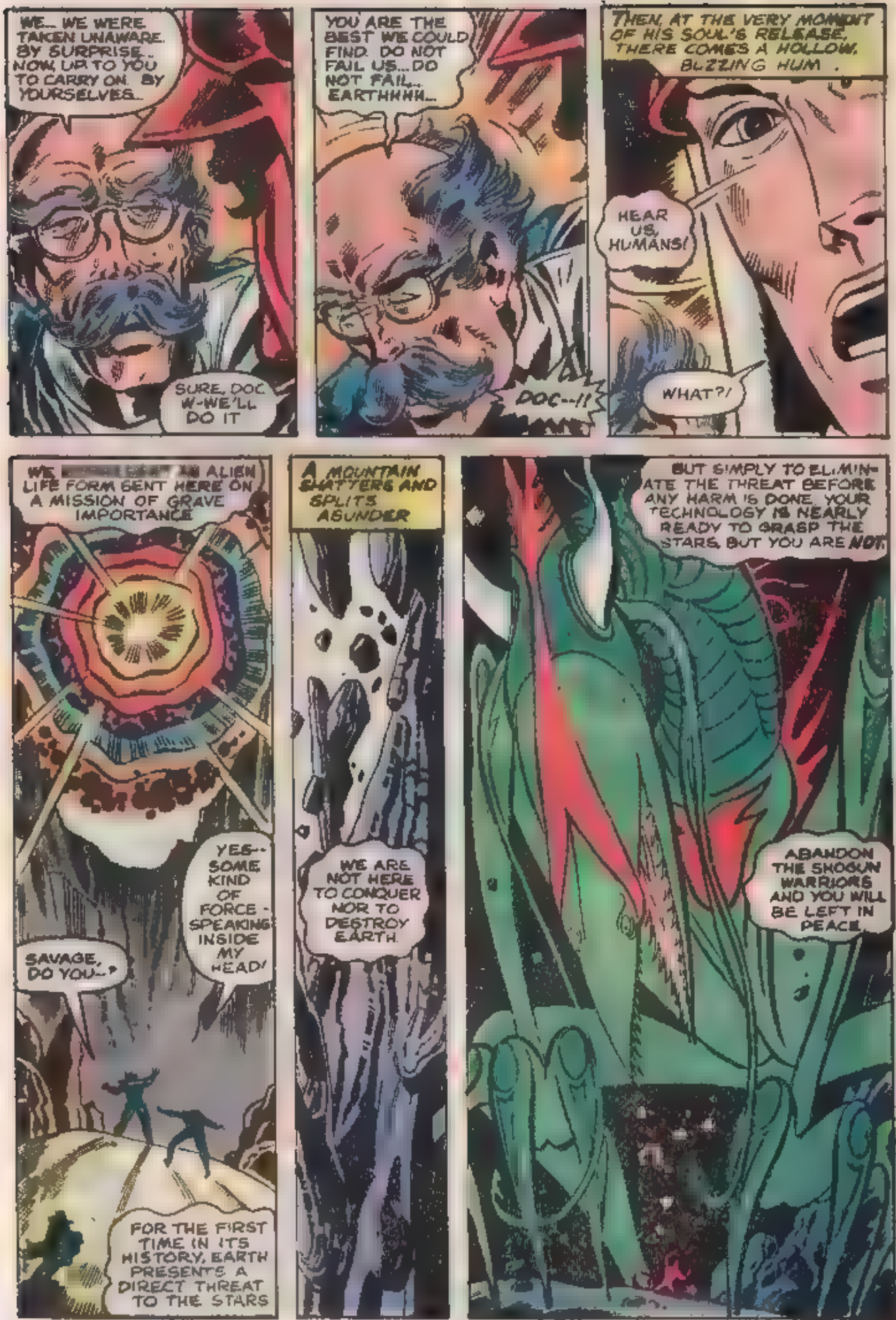
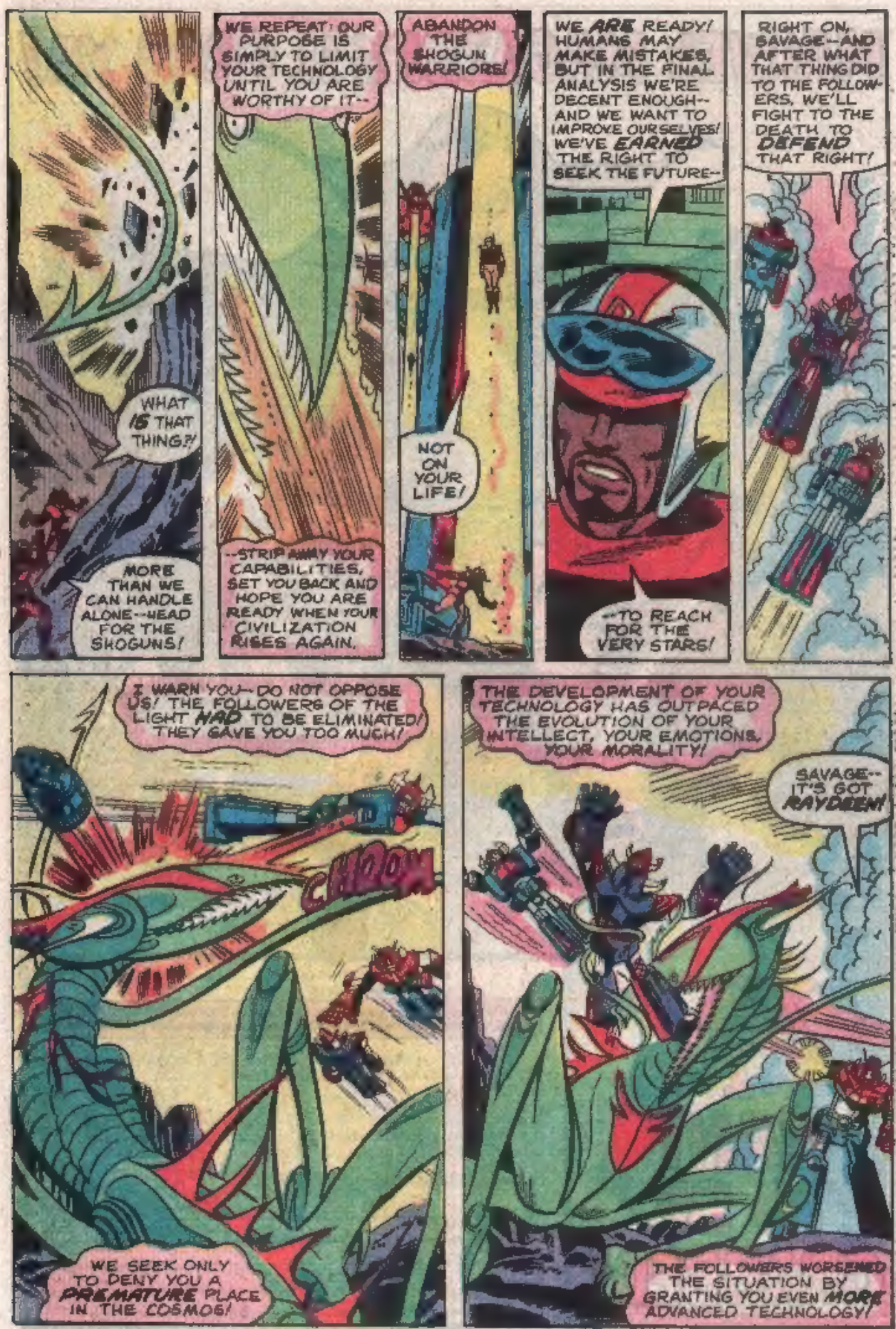

WE... WE WERE TAKEN UNAWARE. BY SURPRISE.. NOW, UP TO YOU TO CARRY ON. BY YOURSELVES...
SURE, DOC. W-WE'LL DO IT
YOU ARE THE BEST WE COULD FIND. DO NOT FAIL US...DO NOT FAIL... EARTHHHH...
DOC--!!
THEN, AT THE VERY MOMENT OF HIS SOUL'S RELEASE, THERE COMES A HOLLOW, BUZZING HUM.
HEAR US, HUMANS!
WHAT?!
WE [redacted] AN ALIEN LIFE FORM SENT HERE ON A MISSION OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE
YES-- SOME KIND OF FORCE - SPEAKING INSIDE MY HEAD!
SAVAGE, DO YOU--?
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS HISTORY, EARTH PRESENTS A DIRECT THREAT TO THE STARS
A MOUNTAIN SHATTERS AND SPLITS ASUNDER
WE ARE NOT HERE TO CONQUER NOR TO DESTROY EARTH.
BUT SIMPLY TO ELIMINATE THE THREAT BEFORE ANY HARM IS DONE. YOUR TECHNOLOGY IS NEARLY READY TO GRASP THE STARS, BUT YOU ARE NOT.
ABANDON THE SHOGUN WARRIORS AND YOU WILL BE LEFT IN PEACE.


WHAT IS THAT THING?!
MORE THAN WE CAN HANDLE ALONE--HEAD FOR THE SHOGUNS!
WE REPEAT: OUR PURPOSE IS SIMPLY TO LIMIT YOUR TECHNOLOGY UNTIL YOU ARE WORTHY OF IT--
--STRIP AWAY YOUR CAPABILITIES, SET YOU BACK AND HOPE YOU ARE READY WHEN YOUR CIVILIZATION RISES AGAIN.
ABANDON THE SHOGUN WARRIORS!
NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
WE ARE READY! HUMANS MAY MAKE MISTAKES, BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS WE'RE DECENT ENOUGH--AND WE WANT TO IMPROVE OURSELVES! WE'VE EARNED THE RIGHT TO SEEK THE FUTURE--
--TO REACH FOR THE VERY STARS!
RIGHT ON, SAVAGE--AND AFTER WHAT THAT THING DID TO THE FOLLOWERS, WE'LL FIGHT TO THE DEATH TO DEFEND THAT RIGHT!
I WARN YOU--DO NOT OPPOSE US! THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LIGHT HAD TO BE ELIMINATED! THEY GAVE YOU TOO MUCH!
CHOOM
WE SEEK ONLY TO DENY YOU A PREMATURE PLACE IN THE COSMOS!
THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR TECHNOLOGY HAS OUTPACED THE EVOLUTION OF YOUR INTELLECT, YOUR EMOTIONS, YOUR MORALITY!
SAVAGE--IT'S GOT RAYDEEN!
THE FOLLOWERS WORSENED THE SITUATION BY GRANTING YOU EVEN MORE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY!

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IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE SHOGUN WARRIORS...
...WE CAN HANDLE THE GIFT JUST FINE...
CHWAM
...THANK YOU!
WUMP
GOOD WORK, SAVAGE-- I'M FREE!
DON'T BE FOOLS! TRY TO UNDERSTAND! THE SHOGUN WARRIORS WERE GIVEN TO YOU BY OTHERS, LIKE US, WHO SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER!
THEY DID KNOW BETTER! THEY HAD THE POWER TO KILL US-- TO DO ANYTHING THEY WANTED TO US--BUT INSTEAD THEY TREATED US WITH KINDNESS, TAUGHT US TO OPPOSE EVIL--AND YOU KILLED THEM!!
LISTEN! IF YOUR EARTH SCIENTISTS SHOULD EVER EXAMINE THE SHOGUN ROBOTS, PLUMB THEIR SECRETS, AND EMPLOY THOSE SECRETS TO BRING ABOUT THE FINAL QUANTUM LEAP IN YOUR TECHNOLOGY--
WE KNOW-- YOU'LL BE EXTREMELY UPSET.
THE ROBOTS MUST BE DESTROYED--AND SO MUST THE ENTITIES KNOWN AS "FANTASTIC FOUR," "SHIELD," "DOCTOR DOOM," AND "ANTHONY STARK."

MIGHTY AMBITIOUS, AREN'T YOU?
HE'S GOT DANGARD--GOTTA REPAY SAVAGE'S FAVOR...
BE CAREFUL, RICHARD! IF YOUR MISSILE-ARROW SHOULD MISS--
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GENJI...
RAYDEEN'S GOT EYES LIKE A CYBERNETIC HAWK!
BOOM
EVEN SO, THE ALIEN THING REFUSES TO QUIT.
THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING! WE WANT ONLY THE ROBOTS, NOT YOUR LIVES!
GAS--!
FSSHHT
BUT IF WE ARE FORCED TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES, WE WILL DO SO!
CAN'T...BREATHE...! SAVAGE...REMEMBER TAMBURA'S DYING WORDS...
DON'T FAIL... DON'T FAIL EARTH...
THE... MOUNTAIN...
RIGHT, GENJI! WE SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF IT SOONER!
KROOM
TRIGGERED BY DANGARD'S CHEST-BEAM, THE MOUNTAIN COLLAPSES INTO A ROARING AVALANCHE...
NO! YOU FOOLS! THE DEATH OF ONE WILL NOT END OUR MISSION--!

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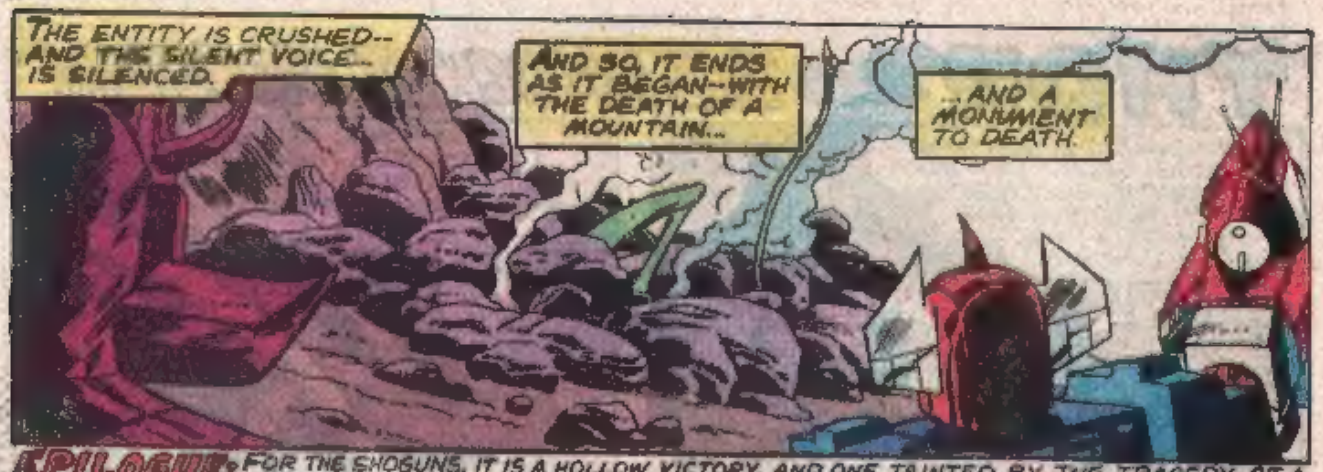
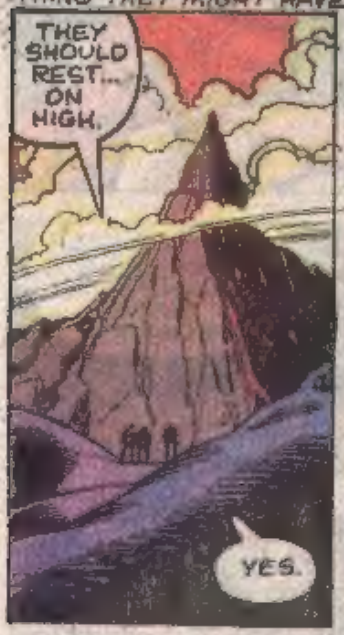

THE ENTITY IS CRUSHED--AND THE SILENT VOICE... IS SILENCED.
AND SO, IT ENDS AS IT BEGAN--WITH THE DEATH OF A MOUNTAIN...
...AND A MONUMENT TO DEATH.

EPILOGUE: FOR THE SHOGUNS, IT IS A HOLLOW VICTORY, AND ONE TAINTED BY THE TRAGEDY OF A GREATER FAILURE. FOR, DEEP IN THEIR PRIVATE HEARTS, THEY WONDER IF SOMETHING THEY MIGHT HAVE DONE...COULD HAVE SAVED THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LIGHT!



WE...WE'RE ALONE NOW. NO MORE TELEPORTATION...NO MORE MAGIC TECHNOLOGY... NO MORE MAINTENANCE OR TRAINING...
...AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, MOST TRAGICALLY, NO MORE GUIDANCE. WE'RE VERY ALONE.

BUT MAYBE IT'S TIME WE STARTED TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES.
AND MAYBE IT'S TIME WE ATONED FOR OUR FAILURE.
THE SHOGUN WARRIORS AWAIT THEIR COMMAND.

NEXT ISSUE FORCED TO COME OF AGE, THE SHOGUNS SEEK A NEW LIFE...ONLY TO FIND--

PERIL IN THE FIRST PASSAGE!